



## AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES (ACS) KUALA LUMPUR QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



December 2013 – February 2014

### Welcome to Ambassador Yun



Ambassador Joseph Y. Yun was confirmed by the full Senate on August 1, 2013, to be the United States Ambassador to Malaysia.

Ambassador Yun joined the Foreign Service in 1985. He is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor. Ambassador Yun most recently served as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs as well as the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs.

### THREATS TO SAFETY AND SECURITY

The Department of State remains concerned about the possibility of terrorist attacks against U.S. citizens in Southeast Asia. Extremist groups in the region have demonstrated the capability to carry out attacks in locations where Westerners congregate, and these groups do not distinguish between civilian and official targets.

U.S. citizens should consider the risks associated with travel to eastern Sabah (Eastern Malaysia) due to the threat from both terrorist and criminal groups. U.S. citizens are advised against travel to and residing on the resort islands of Mabul, Pom Pom,

### Kuala Lumpur ACS News



#### EMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR HOLIDAY CLOSURES

- December 25, 2013 - Christmas Day
- January 1, 2014 - New Years Day
- January 17, 2014 - Thaipusam
- January 20, 2014 - Martin Luther King Day
- Jan 31 & Feb 1 - Chinese New Year

#### SOCIAL MEDIA SERVICE FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS

Follow us and keep up-to-date on all the news regarding services to American Citizens living in and visiting Malaysia.



[https://twitter.com/KL\\_ACS](https://twitter.com/KL_ACS)

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Blog:



Kapalai, Ligitan, Sipadan, and Matakong, as well as the peninsular Lahad Datu district (to include the Tabin Wildlife Reserve). In mid-November, a foreign tourist was killed and his spouse was abducted from a resort on Pom Pom Island.

*Messages for U.S. Citizens:*

[http://malaysia.usembassy.gov/warden\\_information.html](http://malaysia.usembassy.gov/warden_information.html)

### **Parts of Malaysia suffer “worst floods in living memory.”**

The monsoon season this year was particularly bad on the eastern side of Peninsular Malaysia. With nearly 40000 people evacuated from their homes and two reported deaths, many communities are still struggling to recover. Prime Minister Najib has asked for additional special aid for flood victims in the hard hit areas of Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang and Johor. Rains are expected to continue in Sabah and Sarawak with January being the wettest month of the year in Kuching. Appropriate caution should be taken near rivers and the coast during heavy rains and high tide. If you are in Sarawak or Sabah you can dial 999 for emergencies or 555999 for general inquiries. The phone number for the local police in Kota Kinabalu is 088 – 221191 and in Kuching is 082-244444.

### **FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER TEST**

Want to travel the world while serving your country? Consider an exciting career in the Foreign Service! The first step is to take the Foreign Service Officer Test, which will be offered at U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur in February 2014. For further information on how to register for the test and Foreign Service careers, follow the link:

<http://careers.state.gov/officer/selection-process>

### **HOLIDAY TRAVEL TIPS**

For those planning holiday travel, we offer a few tips to make your holiday travel smoother:

Please carefully review the validity of your current U.S. passport. Many governments require US citizens to have at least 6 months validity left in their passports for entry into their countries. Regular U.S. passports are processed in Washington and are usually received within 10 business days after the application is submitted to the U.S. Embassy. More information



The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service provided to U.S. citizens who are traveling to or living in a foreign country. By registering, Embassies and Consulates can better assist you in an emergency, including situations where your family or friends in the U.S. are having problems contacting you with important news.

When you sign up, you will automatically receive the most current information Embassies compile about the country where you will be traveling or living. You will also receive any applicable Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts.

Online Registration; if you are traveling abroad, register your trip online with Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration\\_4789.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_4789.html).

The registration information is used to communicate with US citizens and assist them in case of an emergency. The registration site provides up-to-date travel information with country specific alerts and updates. The information citizens provide is secured behind Department of State firewalls, accessed only by cleared personnel in Embassies, Consulates, and the Department of State, and releasable only with the US Citizen's permission under the provisions of the Privacy Act.

about the passport renewal process can be found at [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

Check the visa requirements for your destination: This information sheets are available online at <http://travel.state.gov/>

### **Traveling With Food, Gifts and Special Items**

When traveling for the holidays, packing gifts and favorite foods can be a challenge. Check out [TSA's Travelers Information](#) page to see how you pack smart for your holiday travel. Don't forget those special items from Malaysia to bring back home.

### **Cleaning House? Don't Throw Out Those Old Passports**

For those of us who move around a lot, keeping track of old travel documents and passports can be a nightmare. In this digital age, why in the world do we need to keep them around anyway? It is important to retain expired passports for several reasons. Smart travelers stash a recently expired passport away in a different place than their valid one when on the road. If the valid passport is lost during the trip, the expired passport is still evidence of identity and citizenship and assists in obtaining a new emergency document. Also, an expired passport can prove previous travel or periods of residence in the United States. For example, you may be required to demonstrate your periods of residence in the United States when applying for a child's Consular Report of Birth Abroad. If you do decide to dispose of travel documents, please do not just throw them out with the trash. These documents contain valuable personally identifiable information that should be closely guarded. Identity thieves or other criminals look for this type of information in order to perpetrate all sorts of cybercrimes and identity theft. Protect yourself and your information by shredding any documents that contain personal information.

### **Subscribing**

Please remind your American friends to enroll in the U.S. State Department's free Smart Traveler Enrollment Program in order for them to be included on the ACS Newsletter mailing list.

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration\\_4789.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_4789.html)



### **Get the free Smart Traveler App!**

The State Department's Smart Traveler app is now available for free:

--In the iTunes store at:

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/smart-traveler/id442693988?mt=8>

--From the Google Play Store at

[http://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.state.apps.smartravel&feature=search\\_result?t=W10](http://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.state.apps.smartravel&feature=search_result?t=W10)

The app was first launched in June 2011. It is the official State Department application for U.S. travelers. The app invites you to see the world with easy access to frequently updated official country information, travel alerts, travel warnings, maps, U.S. embassy locations, and more.

### **SCAMS**

Internet or Email scams: If you feel you have been a victim of an Internet scam, please send all reports of Internet fraud directly to the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) - a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C). IC3 was established to receive internet related criminal complaints and to research, develop, and refer complaints to federal, state, local, or inter-national law enforcement if appropriate.

**This newsletter is published by the American Citizens Services Unit, U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.**